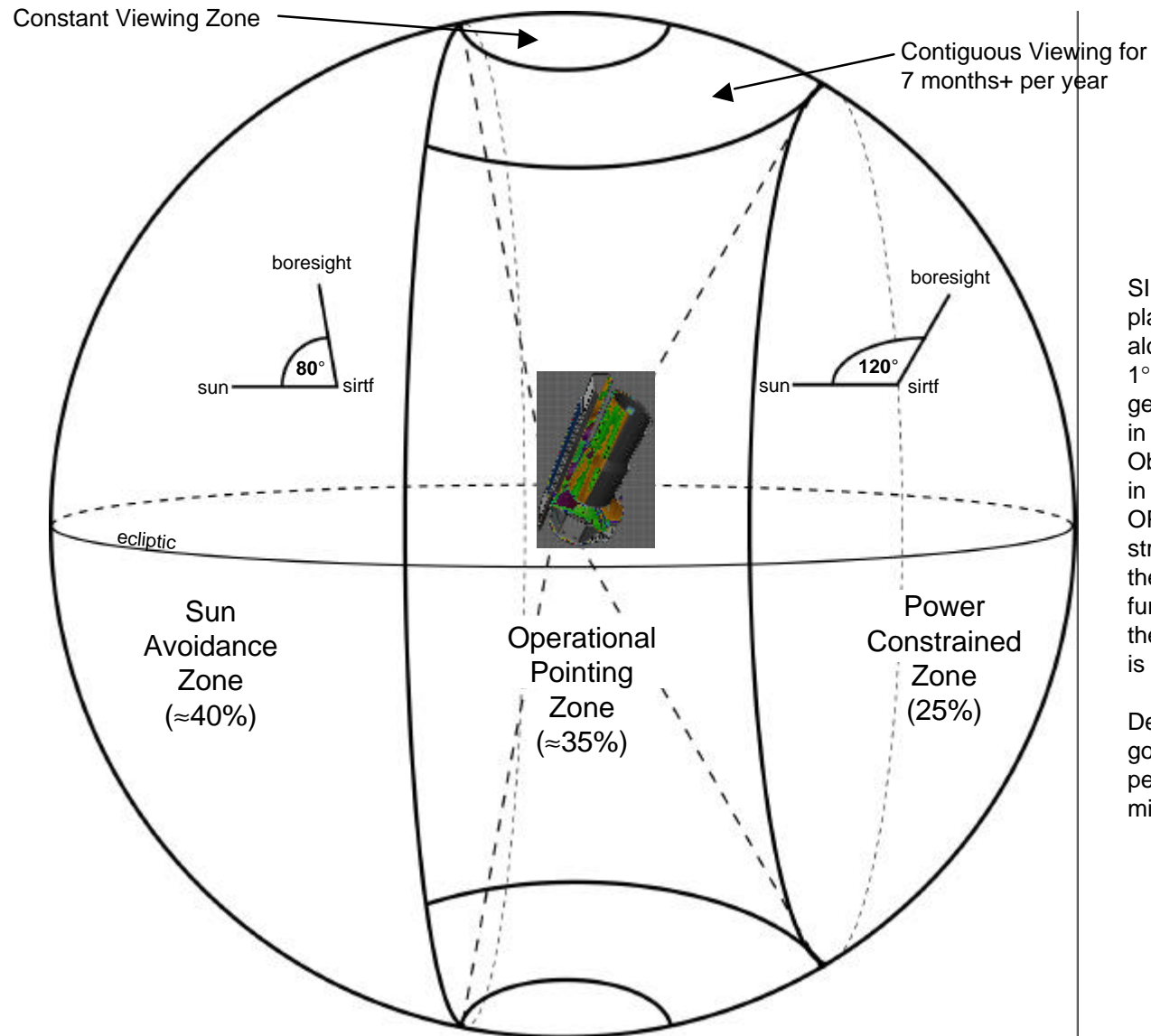
**JPL***Space Infrared Telescope Facility*

SIRTF Instantaneous Sky Visibility

SIRTF

SIRTF's orbit about the Sun is nearly coplanar with the Ecliptic. The mean motion along this "solar orbit" is approximately 1° per day. In this orbit, SIRTF's main geometric observing constraints (as depicted in the unit sphere at left) arise because the Observatory's boresight must always point in the Operational Pointing Zone (OPZ). The OPZ keeps direct or reflected sunlight from striking any cold surface and assures that the solar arrays are well illuminated. To further ensure that sunlight is kept off of the cold surfaces, rotation about the boresight is also restricted (to be less than $\pm 2^\circ$).

Despite these constraints, SIRTF has very good coverage of the entire sky for long periods of time throughout the entire mission.